

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 /070 W

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R 291642Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9031

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 5173

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SF

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS BIKO EXTREMISM

SUMMARY: PRO-SAG "CITIZEN" CITES "NEW YORK TIMES" ARTICLE TO
SUGGEST STEVE BIKO WAS ADVOCATE OF VIOLENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. SEPTEMBER 29 EDITION OF "CITIZEN" CARRIED ARTICLE ENTITLED
"BIKO'S ARMY". ARTICLE CONTAINED EXCERPTS FROM SEPTEMBER 25
"NEW YORK TIMES" PIECE BY JOHN BURNS REPORTING BIKO STATEMENT
TO BURNS IN 1976 THAT A "FACELESS ARMY, THAT WILL DESTROY
AT NIGHT, WILL CREATE A FAR BIGGER FEELING OF INSECURITY THAN
AN ORGANIZED MILITARY FORCE THAT CAN BE CONFRONTED AND SMASHED
AT THE BORDER" AND THAT SUCH AN ARMY "...WOULD DESTROY WHITE
SUBURBS AT NIGHT". THE "CITIZEN" REPORTED THAT MINISTER OF
JUSTICE AND POLICE JIMMY KRUGER MADE EXCEPTION TO BIKO BANNING
ORDERS TO PERMIT THE PAPER TO PUBLISH THE STATEMENTS BY BIKO
AS REPORTED BY NYT. "CITIZEN" ALSO REPORTED BURNS WROTE THAT
BIKO WAS NOT THE MODERATE "CERTAIN WHITE LIBERALISTIC SOUTH
AFRICAN NEWSPAPER" TRIED TO MAKE HIM.

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2. BURNS TOLD US THAT THE "CITIZEN" QUOTE WAS ACCURATE BUT
TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT. THE "CITIZEN" HAD OMITTED THE SUBSEQUENT
QUALIFYING SENTENCES IN WHICH BIKO WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT
HIS ORGANIZATION LEFT VIOLENCE UP TO THE ANC AND PAC AND THAT
"WE ARE CONFINED TO OPERATING PEACEFULLY PRECISELY BECAUSE
WE OPERATE ABOVE GROUND."

3. BURNS SAID THAT BIKO AT THE TIME HAD GIVEN HIM PERMISSION TO QUOTE FREELY FROM THEIR LONG INTERVIEW LAST YEAR. BURNS HAD NEVERTHELESS TONED DOWN HIS INITIAL REPORT. BIKO WAS SHORTLY AFTERWARDS PICKED UP BY POLICE AND QUESTIONED EXTENSIVELY ON THE INTERVIEW. NOW THAT BIKO WAS DEAD, AND GIVEN HIS EARLIER AUTHORIZATION FOR QUOTATION, BURNS SAID HE FELT OBLIGED TO GIVE THE FULL FLAVOR OF BIKO'S VIEWS.

4. BURNS SAID THAT BIKO WAS NOT IN FACT THE MODERATE THE "RAND DAILY MAIL" AND OTHERS BELIEVED HIM TO BE. WHILE BIKO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC PRESSURE, HE BELIEVED VIOLENCE WOULD HAVE TO PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN BRINGING CHANGE TO SOUTH AFRICA. BURNS HAD ALSO FILED WITH HIS STORY BIKO'S STATEMENT THAT PHILOSOPHICALLY HE ACCEPTED MARXISM BUT THE FACT THAT IT WAS THE STATE IDEOLOGY OF THE SOVIET UNION DISTURBED HIM.
BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Subject: PRESS REPORTS BIKO EXTREMISM SUMMARY: PRO-SAG "CITIZEN" CITES "NEW YORK TIMES" ARTICLE TO SUGGEST STEVE BIKO WAS ADVOCATE OF VIOLENCE. END S
TAGS: PINS, SOPN, SF, US, (BIKO, STEVE)
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